



**Laugh, Cry, Or  
Go Crazy**

**Aibohp**

## Laugh, Cry, Or Go Crazy by Aibohp

**Category:** IT (2017), IT - Stephen King

**Genre:** Canonical Child Abuse, Childhood Friends, Emotional Hurt/Comfort, Fluff, Gen, Implied/Referenced Child Abuse, Male-Female Friendship

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Beverly Marsh, Richie Tozier

**Relationships:** Beverly Marsh & Richie Tozier

**Status:** Completed

**Published:** 2017-09-30

**Updated:** 2017-09-30

**Packaged:** 2020-01-21 11:42:03

**Rating:** General Audiences

**Warnings:** No Archive Warnings Apply

**Chapters:** 1

**Words:** 2,632

**Publisher:** archiveofourown.org

**Summary:**

Richie is Beverly's best friend because he understands that sometimes you have to laugh because the only other options are to cry or go crazy.

or

Richie finds Beverly in the Barrens while she's trying to stay out of her house and away from her dad.

## Laugh, Cry, Or Go Crazy

### Author's Note:

So I saw some posts (like I mean two posts because everything is Richie/Eddie on there and I'm just like wut?) about how in the book Richie and Beverly were probably the closest out of the Losers and that they wanted more fic for this sort of thing? So I'm here for you, babes. I'm here.

I mean they're not wrong. Richie was a surprisingly good emotional kickstand for Bill, too (hence my Richie/Bill fics). And I feel like Bev probably has a pretty dark sense of humor and Richie is the only one who isn't going to be slightly horrified by it?

Anyway, as always, my fics lean more toward the book than either the movie or the miniseries. Have fun, stay safe.

Beverly didn't care if the Kenduskeag Stream cutting through the barrens was full of grey water that would lead into the river proper that ran through town. She still thought it was pretty. It wasn't as though the water was actually grey. For the most part it ran clear and even when if none of the boys were there, Beverly liked to come down to the Barrens and watch the water rush over the stones at the bottom of streambed. Usually she ended up there on days when she knew her father would be home all day, or maybe the day after he'd gotten mad and thrown her around their apartment like a ragdoll.

That was all she was to him, she sometimes, thought. A ragdoll.

Her mother was no different. Al Marsh didn't see his daughter or wife as people with feelings or minds of their own. He saw them as pretty little dolls that were his to possess, his to make dance how he pleased. And if they didn't act how he thought they should then there'd be hell to pay.

Beverly hated her father.

She hated that he hit her, the way he would give her those odd looks that sent a cold, uncomfortable needle of ice digging into her belly. Most of all, she hated that she had any good memories of him at all. It would be so much easier to just hate him. The tangled ball of love/hate that was often connected to the man made her sick.

He didn't deserve any of her love with how he treated her.

With a sigh, Beverly tried to shake such thoughts out of her head. The day was too beautiful to be dwelling on such things. Thinking about her father always lead to thinking about how much she hated adults in general. Boys too!

Well, except for *her* boys. And it wasn't just boys but any kids outside the Losers in general. They were all so mean to her and she didn't know why!

Grumbling to herself, she covered her eyes with her hands and vowed not to think about it anymore. She refused to let her father, the kids at school, or the town of Derry as a whole ruin her day anymore than they already had. Even with the hot purple skin around her eye to remind her of everything she could be angry about there were plenty of other things to take her focus off of it if she would just let it.

The Barrens were lit up with noonday sun, casting dappled shadows over the ground. Shafts of light cut through the trees and birds were chirping all around. Everything was green and alive and beautiful. Beverly breathed in deeply as she lay by the stream. If anything had asked she would have had trouble to explain why she was laying there. The cool, damp ground under her back was comforting. Having her whole body stretched out across the ground made her feel connected to everything around her. She would have sworn she could feel it moving on it's axis as it circled around the sun.

Mike would have understood perfectly, she thought absently to herself.

Stan, Eddie, and Richie would've called her nuts, but in a friendly way.

Bill would have had the exact words to explain what she was feeling

but.

Ben would have had a fun fact about space to share with them all.

Thinking of her boys made her feel better. She loved each of them in their own way and she loved how all seven of them clicked together. All of them were different, but at the same time very much the same in a deep, meaningful sort of way that she couldn't put her finger on directly.

"Well wot do we have here, then," called Richie's unmistakable voice. She thought maybe he was trying to sound Australian but he mostly just sounded like himself. "Looks like a mermaid's done gone and gotten washed up on the shore!"

Beverly had been so caught up in her thoughts that she hadn't even noticed the rustle of leaves as he clopped noisily into the Barrens. Then again the Barrens were theirs and there was no reason for him to be quiet. It would be like knocking on the door of your own house. Laughing at his antics, Beverly let her hands fall from her eyes and rolled her head back to look at him. He was alone. Surprisingly she was happy about that. It wasn't as though she didn't like the other boys but Richie may have been her best friend out of all of them. She thought maybe it was his sense of humor and the fact that he didn't cringe away from her sometimes dark sense of humor like the others. Bill didn't either but he was more serious than Richie was.

Richie's eyes widened slightly when he saw her face. It wasn't like it was the first time he or any of the losers saw her with bruises. Usually her dad was a little more careful about her face but with school out what was the trouble with one little black eye? It would probably bother him more than anyone else and not because it would make him feel bad. Most of the time the Losers would politely ignore the bruises, especially if they were just a flash of black and blue peeking out from under her sleeve. She was pretty sure that only Richie and maybe Bill knew they even came from her dad. It wasn't like she went around announcing it. If anything she tried to avoid the topic all together.

Richie was the first and only person she really told about her Dad. She never said anything to Bill but there's something in the way his

eyes will linger on her arm if he spots a bruise there like he knows. Maybe he just notices that the blood is pooled up under her skin in the shape of fingers and that they're too long to belong to a kid like them.

"What the hell happened to your face, Marsh," Richie asked, coming closer to drop down next to her. It shouldn't make her laugh because it wasn't funny but the blunt way that he commented about her black eye made her giggle. If Eddie had been there he would have slapped him on the arm or something and told him to shut up.

"My dad," Beverly answered pushing herself up into a sitting position. There was dirt on the back of her arms and ground into the heels of her hands. There's also a nasty bruise that wrapped around her elbow but Richie wasn't looking at that. "You got any smokes," she asked, eyeing his shirt pocket.

"Oh I see how it is, Bev. You just want me for my ciggies. It hurts, it really does," Richie replied with a grin as he dug into the pocket she'd been looking at and pulled out two little white sticks, likely pinched from his dad. He stuck one between his lips and then passed the other to Beverly. After she plucked the cigarette from his fingers he lifted his hand to lightly brush his fingers under the bruise painting her eye and the top part of her cheek. "Jeeze. The way he's goin' he's going to turn you into a heavyweight champion in no time."

Beverly laughed again, grinning ruefully at her friend. It wasn't funny, not really. Any adult probably would have been appalled by such a comment about a little girl getting beat by her father. Hell, none of the other Losers would have even laughed about it. Only Richie had the balls to joke about the situation like he did. Beverly thought that maybe he understood that sometimes all you could do was laugh. If you didn't laugh then you'd probably scream, or cry, or just go crazy and pull all your hair out.

"Oh yeah, you'll see me on TV soon, Tozier," Beverly said, rolling her eyes as Richie drew back his hand and pulled a little packet of matches from his pocket to light his cigarette. When he was done, she

leaned in to light hers of his own. After taking a drag and then blowing a plume of smoke into the air she sighed. "Why are people in Derry such assholes?"

Her question hung in the air and she went back to laying down beside the stream, this time flopping her arm out so she could dip her fingers in the water. Richie seemed to be mulling over his answer as he sat next to her, staring at their clouds of smoke as they got swept lazily through the sunbeams cutting through the leaves. He was astoundingly serious sometimes, especially given his goofy nature. Beverly often thought that there was much more to Richie than met the eye, more than he wanted everyone to see.

"Probably because we're different," Richie started and, whether or not he saw Beverly's eyes rolling again, he cut her off. "Like I was talking to Stan once and he was telling me about this stuff about animals. Apparently if a stray dog or cat has a baby that is sick or just not right it'll eat or kill it so that it doesn't spoil things for the rest of the litter."

His nose wrinkled at the thought and Beverly frowned, sucking on her cigarette. That was sad. Even with as terrible as her father was, she didn't think he'd kill her for being born different or sick. She thought back to her mother asking, *"Does your father touch you, Bevvie?"* At the time she hadn't understood what she meant but she now thought that maybe it had something to do with that way he looked at her sometimes. It was almost like he was hungry.

"Anyway... I think that it's like Derry is the cat and we're the kittens. To them we're weird. I think they know that we know what they don't know? Shit... Bill would be able to explain it better," Richie continued with a frown. Sighing, he flicked his finger against his cigarette and let the ashes fall on the pebbly ground at the edge of the stream.

"I think I get it, Richie," Beverly said after a long, quiet moment. He looked over at her with those sky-blue eyes of his, so much brighter than Bill's. "I think maybe there's a little bit of IT in everyone in Derry, especially the adults and we're the only ones who are rejecting IT," she said, looking up at him. "We don't just ignore the fucked up shit that happens here. We can hurt IT and I think the part of IT that

is in everyone in Derry knows that.”

“We should just run away,” Richie huffed, leaning back and laying next to Beverly instead of sitting by her hip. She rolled her head to look at him, a small smile on her face and eyes half lidded.

“We can’t... not yet at least. We’re just kids. And even if we were one of the big kids who could run away we couldn’t yet,” Beverly pointed out, the corner of her lips twitching at Richie’s frustrated look. His eyes were narrowed in annoyance behind his taped up glasses.

“You and Bill are gonna get us all killed with this hero crap,” Richie finally grunted, sticking his nearly finished ciggie between his lips again. He smoked it down to the filter before grinding the tip into the ground and flicking it off into the Barrens. “You two are stronger than the rest of us. It isn’t fair that we have to kill this... this thing. We’re just kids.”

“But we aren’t, not right now,” Beverly said, pulling her hand from the water and using it to hold what was left of her cigarette while she snuck her other hand down to grab a hold of Richie’s. He gripped her hand tightly in return. “We’re... something else,” she said, wishing for the uptenth time that Bill was there. Like Richie said, he would be able to explain better. He could weave words like spells and make you see what he meant. “You can feel it, can’t you? Whatever it is between the seven of us? It makes us stronger than just kids. We’re the only ones who can do anything about IT. The adults don’t seem to notice anything is wrong at all. So long as all seven of us are together, we’ll be fine.”

Beside her, Richie sighed and Beverly smiled that knowing smile that always seemed to make her seem more worldly than she really was. It was like there was some secret in her smile, Richie would tell her later. It was like she knew something that the people around her didn’t. Even if he didn’t like what she had said, he knew it was true. She also knew that deep down he knew that they needed all seven of them to be together or else they really would die. And he loved them all too much to let IT have them just because he was scared.

“Fine,” Richie finally said, turning his head to glare at her, though there was mirth that lurked in his eyes and ruined the annoyance he

was trying to convey. "You're gonna protect me right," he asked, pitching his voice high and trying to sound like a Southern Belle. "I just don't know what I would do without some big, strong fella like yourself to keep me safe."

Beverly cackled, stubbing her ciggie out and flicking it into the stream. She wasn't sure if it was what he said or just how spectacularly awful the voice he was using was that made her laugh but she was glad for it. Pushing herself up on her elbow she leaned over Richie and laid a hand on his chest.

"Don't worry, dollface! I'll take care of you," Beverly managed to get out through the laughter, though she ended up snickering until she had to hunch over the boy, her forehead pressing into his collarbones as she laughed into his shirt. "W-Won't let that creepy clown lay a finger on you!"

"Oh lawdy, thank ya, Missus," Richie said, wrapping his arms around his friend and giving her a tight, crushing hug. "I just don't know what I'd do without you," he declared, drawing out the country accent even more and making Beverly howl with glee.

Then suddenly she felt him turning them both over and Beverly had only a moment to panic before Richie rolled them both into the stream. She screamed just as soon as her back hit the water and Richie started to laugh. He was up and running just as soon as he got her in the water and Beverly was hot on his heels, her soaking sneakers squelching around her feet and wet, red hair clinging to the back of her head and neck.

"I'M GONNA BEAT YOUR ASS TRASHMOUTH," Beverly cried, a smile on her face as Richie ran from her, making an effort to stay within sight but out of reach.

"YOU GOTTA CATCH ME FIRST, MARSH," Richie cried over his shoulder.

They spent the rest of the day chasing each other around the Barrens. When they were too tired to move anymore they sprawled out beside the clubhouse so that they could dry out before they headed home. Laying next to each other in the sun, Beverly thought that Richie was

probably the best friend she could have ever asked for. No matter the circumstances, she was glad for whatever it was that had pulled the seven of them together that Summer.

**Author's Note:**

Hope you enjoyed it.